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## **Sen. Allen tours chain of lakes to promote and discuss watercraft tourism**

**LANSING** – State Sen. Jason Allen, R-Traverse City, traversed the chain of lakes in Cheboygan County yesterday to discuss issues facing the area – primarily tourism promotion and the impact of boating tourism.

Allen, who was joined on the tour by members of the Cheboygan and Indian River chambers of commerce, had an opportunity to tour the Cheboygan Marina and the Cheboygan Lock.

“Northern Michigan depends heavily on watercraft tourism to bring in business during the summer months,” Allen said. “This was a great opportunity for me to get a first-hand look at how boating tourism impacts northern Michigan and talk with those in the industry. We need to make sure we maximize our exquisite resources to promote tourism in our area.”

Michigan continues to lead the nation in the number of registered watercraft, boasting more than one million vessels. There are 3,121 miles of shoreline, more than 11,000 inland lakes and an excess of 36,000 miles of rivers and streams in the state.

Possessing more navigable waterways than any other state in the nation, the boating industry continues to play a major role in the state’s economy. The industry contributes more than \$1 billion in spending and over 20,000 jobs.

On Thursday, Aug. 4, Allen will be shifting focus to shipping in the Great Lakes when he joins Sen. Tony Stamas, R-Midland, for a tour of the LaFarge cement company in Alpena. The day will include a tour of a freighter and a discussion with LaFarge employees regarding Great Lakes shipping issues.

“Our waters are an asset in so many ways and an integral part of our lives,” Allen said. “It is critical to understand how truly important boating and shipping is to communities across northern Michigan.”

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Editor’s Note: A photo of Sen. Allen on the chain of lakes tour is available for download from the Senate Majority Photowire at: [www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/photowire/Allen/Allen.htm](http://www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/photowire/Allen/Allen.htm)